

# Pursuing Opium Sellers in New York

**Deputy Police Commissioner Simon Reveals the Tireless Attacks of the Police on the Dope Supply of Drug-Crazed Criminals as He Destroys Enough Seized Opium to Put Half the City to Sleep**

Christmas Post-Card Showing How a "Deck" of Heroin Was Smuggled Into a Prisoner in the Tombs.



**In the Dish With the Small Amount Is Enough Heroin to Kill an Adult. The Pile of Heroin in the Other Dish Shows How Much the Confirmed Addict Is Able to Take.**

DOWN in the furnace room in the basement of New York's Police Headquarters the other day stood the famous Police Commissioner, Richard E. Enright, and Special Deputy Police Commissioner Carleton Simon. With their feet on the grimy furnace room floor and their faces red from the glow of the open fire-box, they stood and watched more than three million and a half dollars' worth of forbidden drugs thrown in on to the glowing coals.

Opium in one form or another or chemical derivatives of opium made up most of that valuable but contraband collection. It represented a little less than a year's accumulation of the Narcotic Division of the New York police force under the command of Special Deputy Commissioner Simon.

If the detectives were able to find and confiscate such a quantity of dope in a year's time it must, of course, represent but a small percentage of the actual amount of forbidden drugs which are brought into New York City and consumed in a twelve-month. It was a startling evidence of the widespread use of drugs, and the impressive spectacle sobered the faces of Commissioner Enright and his deputy, and determined them to pursue the wicked traffic with even greater vigor.

In addition to the assortment of raw opium, prepared opium, morphine, heroin, cocaine and other contraband drugs there was an extraordinary assortment of opium pipes and "hop layouts," hypodermic needles and other things used by drug addicts. All these were thrown into the fire-box of the furnace.

"Well, it is hard to estimate the real value to the community of what we have destroyed here to-day," said Commissioner Simon as he tossed the last package of drugs into the furnace. "Not all drug addicts are criminals, but most criminals are drug addicts. We have destroyed enough drugs to-day to put half of Greater New York to sleep. No one can say how many drug-crazed criminals and crimes of craftiness and violence have been averted by the seizure and destruction of all this stuff."

It is the drug that inspires the crafty schemes in the minds of highwaymen, burglars, confidence men and murderers, and gives them the courage to do their desperate work. A group of criminals, for instance, will "lie up" for the night in some hidden den, smoking opium. Out of the fumes will come an idea for swindling a rich and innocent widow, perhaps, or a plan for holding up a paymaster or blowing a safe.

Then the schemers sleep, dreaming weird, exotic, blissful dreams, through the thick murky haze, and in the morning at least one of the band will remember the brilliant idea of the night before.

The idea still seems feasible—but it requires courage—ratlike courage—to carry it out. Normal men—even criminals not under the influence of drugs—would lack the nerve to commit the crime. But the "hop-heads" do not give up; they know how they can get the nerve. A jab of the hypodermic needle, a sniff of cocaine or heroin—and they are stimulated, madly, unreasonably, to the point where nothing can stop them.

Under the influence of the drugs petty thieves shoot their victims, purse snatchers brutally assault young girls, confidence men not only swindle their prey, but poi-



**Photograph of Part of the Three Million and a Half Dollars Worth of Contraband Drugs, Opium Pipes and Layouts Seized by the New York Police Narcotic Division in the Last Year.**

son them. Drugs not only stimulate crime, but intensify it. And the drug evil is growing, as the police know. Specific localities may not realize it, but throughout the country officers of the law are coming to recognize the drug traffic as one of the main roots of the evils with which they constantly contend.

Drugs make criminals in more than one way. Not only does the use of drugs tend to destroy the mental resistance to evil that is called morals, but drugs seem to make their victims insensible to the difference between right and wrong. Drugs now cost so much money that the addict is usually compelled to resort to crime in order to buy them. Many a criminal has committed his first offense in order to buy his "dope." Commissioner Simon says that the average drug fiend pays \$5 a day, \$35 a week for his supply. He has arrested addicts who confessed to paying as high as \$16 a day.

In the sixteen months that Dr. Simon has been in office his Narcotic Division has made about 4,000 arrests. The record for this year is well ahead of that for a corresponding period last year—which does not mean that the drug evil is increasing out of all bounds in New York City, but merely that the Narcotic Division is increasingly efficient in keeping pace.

Under the State law anyone caught with drugs illegally in his possession may be arrested and sent to take "the cure"—a scientific treatment administered in a State institution, where the patient is given diminishing doses of his drug, fed according to prescribed dietary, and made to exercise until eventually he has lost the "habit" and is well and strong enough mentally and physically to be released. The cure really cures, but, unfortunately, underworld victims return to their old

haunts and associates and often are soon enmeshed in the toils of the drug again.

It is through the discovery and arrest of drug users that Dr. Simon's men get to the drug peddlers—the men they are really after. The drug addict tells the police where he buys his supply, or they shadow him until they find out for themselves. Then, pretending to be drug fiends themselves—every detective in the Narcotic Division can give an excellent imitation of a "cokey" or a "hop-head"—they persuade the peddler to sell them the drug. Then he is arrested, or his depot raided. It was the spoils of these raids that went into the furnace—except for several thousand dollars' worth still awaiting use as evidence in court.

Where does all this drug come from? The Federal law forbids its importation except under bond. The Treasury Department has a force of men at work to prevent it being smuggled in—too small a force to cover the lengthy borders and seacoast of the country. Much of it comes from Europe. Dr. Simon, who has agents in England and the Continent, discovered recently that the Germans were manufacturing heroin and cocaine synthetically, and that they and a Japanese syndicate were planning to flood the United States with their products. There is no law in Germany or Japan to forbid the exportation of narcotics.

A good deal of dope has found its way to New York recently from Canada, which in turn got it from Mexico. By the arrest in New York a few weeks ago of a Montreal criminal and opium user Dr. Simon verified information coming to him from other sources, namely, that the drug ring in Montreal has been using chorus girls playing in Montreal to smuggle drugs over the border.

The Montreal band made it a practice

to lure the girls to a certain notorious dive which pretended to be a theatrical club, and by slipping a drug into their drinks enslaved them. They craved the drug, after they had been told what it was that made their drink so "different," and they could only get the drug by doing the will of the gang. Some of them were set to work trying to corrupt customs officers, others carried supplies of the drug boldly away with them when their shows left town.

Still others became regular travelling saleswomen, making the triangular trip between Montreal, Boston and New York. The drug was concealed in ingenious ways.

The mysterious deaths of several beautiful girls in New York recently hinge upon the operations of the Montreal drug ring, as did the wild flight of an unnamed woman from Montreal to New York in a taxi not so long ago—an adventure that remains a mystery to far.

The drug evil has developed a new form of criminal, which Dr. Simon has isolated and identified just as a bacteriologist might isolate and describe a new germ. He is the "drug booster," who seldom uses the drug but persuades others to use it. He is the missionary, the advance agent of the drug ring.

Sometimes he distributes free samples, sometimes he enslaves a number of girls and spreads the habit through them all over a factory or store. He and his assistants work on a commission basis. He is the successor to the cadet or procurer of the white-slave traffic, for he finds he can use girls more profitably in peddling drugs than in other forms of vice. Recently Dr. Simon has found school children engaged



**Deputy Police Commissioner Simon and Lieutenant Joseph J. Mooney Destroying Dope and Opium Pipes in the Furnace at Police Headquarters, New York.**

occasions he actually supplied experts to "cook" the opium for a patron who wanted to treat his guests to a smoke.

The tenseness of modern life, the after-war reaction—these and many other factors are responsible for the increase in the drug evil, and it takes steady, patient work on Commissioner Simon's part to combat it. He himself works with his men almost every night, sometimes until daylight, watching suspects, raiding drug dens or opium dens, questioning prisoners.

The doctor is a good example of Commissioner Enright's policy of placing competent civilians in the Police Department. For many years Dr. Simon was well known as an alienist and criminologist. He figured as an expert in the Burtz, Guidensuppe, Morrison and Molineaux murder trials, and when the murderer Tapley was hanged in Jersey City some years ago Dr. Simon received the signals which, by prearrangement, the murderer sent until he lost consciousness. The results of this experiment did much to abolish that form of capital punishment in New Jersey.

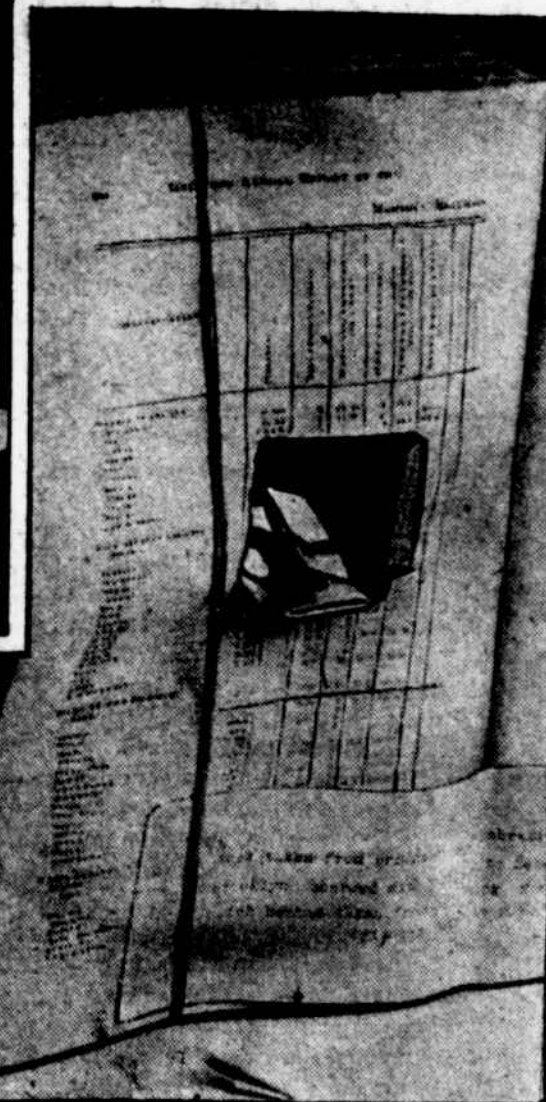
It was Dr. Simon who conducted the principal investigation into the "water cure" which the army was accused of practicing in the Philippines, and who made psychological studies of Coflogos, President McKinley's assassin. A few weeks ago the Federal Government subpoenaed him to act as expert witness at the trial in Oklahoma City of the man who gave a hashish cigarette to a police officer, putting the policeman to sleep and allowing prisoners to escape. Dr. Simon's testimony corroborated other evidence and four men were convicted.

One of the greatest forward steps in the war on drugs is the founding by Dr. Simon of a central clearing house for the photographs and records of drug users and peddlers. He is in correspondence with the police authorities in more than 300 cities here and in Europe, and exchanges with them the dossiers of anyone found to be engaged in the drug traffic. A few days ago Dr. Simon's men arrested a Los Angeles addict who had been in New York only eight hours.

And along about five o'clock the other morning the Montreal "hop head" referred to above was talking to the quiet, kindly-voiced man who seemed to have something to do with the detectives who had made the arrest, and yet was not like them.

"Well," said the "hop head," "I haven't been able to do a thing since I landed here six weeks ago. Haven't made a cent. And I hear this guy Simon is a tough egg—you can't get to him, and his men have driven most of the gang out of town—that's why there's so many of them in Canada now, and why junk costs so much more in New York than other places. It's hard to get, and this guy Simon is making it harder all the time."

It was "this guy Simon" to whom the "hop head" was speaking, but he never knew it.



**"Decks" of Heroin Concealed in a Copy of the New York Board of Health Report.**

in this practise; one of the women referred to above had a large clientele in fashionable hotels and made a specialty of boosting the drug among college students.

Dance hall habitués number many drug-boasters; others pose as chorus girls. If their customers are of the higher planes of society they seldom fall within the clutches of the police, because there is enough money available to buy the drug without resorting to crime. In the last few weeks, however, Commissioner Simon has run down some of the peddlers who supply the upper West Side, the Murray Hill section and Fifth Avenue with drugs, and wealthy users of narcotics are finding it more difficult to get their daily dope.

One of these peddlers had a route as definite as that of a milkman. Beginning at six every morning he made his rounds of fashionable apartment houses, leaving three decks of cocaine here, a phial of morphine there, half a dozen decks of heroin at the next place. Sometimes, his books showed, he was called on to supply additional opium or heroin for a "party," just as a caterer might supply dinners for a wedding. It is said that on several